GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4798
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2000
LAYING OF OPTICAL FIBRE CABLE
UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Indian Railways are laying Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) along the 62,000 route kms of railway track;

(b) if so, the total cost of the project;

(c) the time by which the OFC is likely to be laid and started revenue earning;

(d) whether the cost benefit analysis has been done; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) Yes, Sir. A policy decision has been taken by the Ministry to build a nation wide broadband telecom & multimedia network by laying Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) along the 62,800 route kms of Railway track by utilising Railways' right of way through a professionally managed corporation.

(b) Decision regarding cost of the project would be taken on receipt of the business plan from the consultant to be appointed for this purpose.

(c) In the first phase, Railways plan to build a 7,800 kms long OFC network interconnecting 4 major metros viz., Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and 4 already developed/fast developing IT portal cities of Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune and Ahmedabad. It is expected that the Corporation will pay upfront charges to Railway's to the tune of Rs.500 crore during Financial Year 2000-2001.

(d)&(e) Railways are in the process of appointing a consultant for developing business plan for Railways nationwide broadband telecom and multimedia network.